

**From:** [Mac Hickley](#)  
**To:** [RSCommittee.Admin](#)  
**Cc:** [MaryJane Alanko](#)  
**Subject:** Review of the Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 5:04:04 PM

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On behalf of the Alberta Professional Planners Institute (APPI), I am grateful that your office brought this review to my attention. APPI provides regulatory oversight for all Registered Professional Planners in Alberta, and the public interest is central to our mission. Protection of the public interest is engrained in the DNA of professional planning. The public interest is a fundamental precept of accredited university planning programs; it is inherent in the certification process of each Registered Professional Planner; and it is at the heart of the Professional Code of Practice for all members of APPI as well as the Canadian Institute of Planners.

I would like to commend the Government of Alberta for instigating a review of this Act essentially in accordance with the timeframe outlined therein, as there have been occasions in the past where pieces of legislation have not been reviewed in as timely a fashion. That said, however, this particular consultation was not well advertised, nor supported by useful guidance materials or suggested amendments, nor was it clear about the purpose being sought through the review. Indeed, it is clear that amendments were made to the Act in at least 2017 – less than the five-year review period. Further, since APPI has had no direct involvement in any implementation actions under the Act, we are not in a position to comment on any specific gaps, shortcomings or potential improvements for more efficient or effective implementation.

In light of these factors, I feel obliged to reiterate APPI's commitments to serving, safeguarding and advocating for the public interest, as well as our strong belief that it must be protected. To that end, it is APPI's position that the *Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act* should not be amended at this time, with possible exceptions for instances where the proposed amendments

1. afford greater protection for whistleblowers than what is contained in the Act currently (e.g., to better secure their personal information from disclosure);
2. provide greater separation between elected officials and assigned authorities under the Act (e.g., designated officers) to increase the Act's non-partisan foundation and appearance; or
3. reduce the risks (real or perceived) of bringing sensitive information forward for review and adjudication.

Thank you once again for bringing the current review of the *Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act* to my attention, on behalf of APPI.

Yours truly,

Mac Hickley, RPP, MCIP  
President, Alberta Professional Planners Institute